

UNITY

AND THE UNIVERSITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

VOLUME XVII.]

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CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

EDITORIALS—

Notes : Mr. Cooke's Study of Browning ; Gladstone's Attitude ; Decayed Apples ; Doctor Hale's Visit ; A Decoration Day Lay Sermon ; President Adams on Character ; Good-speed to Mr. Utter ; What Union Means ; The Church Universal ; A Mother's Loyalty ; Horns Becoming Superfluous ; Twenty Great Novels ; Western Support to the A. U. A.	227
UNITY Sunday Circles. IV. The Name.....	228
Blair's Subsequent Tooth-ache Bill.—W. C. G.....	229
Overstraining.—J. V. B.	229

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES—

The Two Paths.....	230
Mrs. Stowe's Influence on Literature.—JOHN FRASER.....	230

CORRESPONDENCE—

A Protest ; Johnny's Views of Inspiration.....	230
--	-----

THE STUDY TABLE—

Poetry by the Month.—E. R. C.....	231
-----------------------------------	-----

THE HOME—

The Veteran.—W. C. G.....	232
Scattered Broadcast ; Dandelions ; Evenings at Home.....	233

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

UNITY CHURCH-DOOR PULPIT—

The Basis of Religious Fellowship.—J. C. LEARNED.....	235
---	-----

ANNOUNCEMENTS.....	239
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MR. CHADWICK, in the excellent number of the *Unitarian Review* for June, speaking of Mr. Cooke's new book on "Poets and Problems", says : "His study of Browning is the most interesting and satisfactory portion of his book. * * We do not know where in a consecutive statement so much illumination of Browning's method and purpose can be found."

THE grandest spectacle in the world of humanity to-day is that of Gladstone, the "old man eloquent", the octogenarian rejuvenated with a prophetic purpose to right an ancient wrong. Well does Mr. Farrington in his *Register* communication from England say that Mr. Gladstone's policy "is increasing in favor with man and it was with God in the beginning".

THE apples of literature are all turning out unsound. More and more doubtful grows the apple-tree part of the Adam and Eve story. The William Tell apple has become a legend. And now Sir Isaac Newton's is in danger. That he was in a garden when the thought of "gravitation" struck him, is allowed; but it did not come down in an apple. It was Voltaire who dropped the apple into the story. So says a new-version story-teller.

REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE is on his annual pilgrimage among the colleges. He reaches Antioch by the way of Chicago this time, and will speak next Sunday morning for Professor Swing, at Music Hall, and Sunday evening for All Souls church at the hall at the corner of Oakwood boulevard and Ellis avenue. Doctor Hale has to-day probably a wider constituency than any other Unitarian minister in America, and his work is all the more Unitarian

because his constituency is secured and held by non-theological and non-ecclesiastical measures. By the law of "ten times one is ten", which he has done so much to exemplify as well as to state, he has done much toward making the Unitarian movement what he himself called it in his recent article in the *North American Review*, the "Church of the Holy Spirit". In this recent rush for a basis of fellowship among us, why has not some one thought of Mr. Hale's all-convincing and all-embracing lines :

"Look up, not down,
Look out, not in ;
Look forward, not back,
And lend a hand."

Whatever the theoretic basis may be, this is the practical and all-spiritual basis of every true Unitarian church, conference and association in the land ; and so long as this spirit grows in the world there is no danger of Unitarianism dying out or of the kingdom of man paling into anything but the ever-glowing and ever glorious kingdom of God.

OUR contributor, J. N. Sprigg, Esq., of Quincy, Illinois, delivered the decoration address at Edina, Missouri, which turned out to be, as all such addresses ought, a helpful sermon of the liberal faith. "There still remains", he said, "too much tendency toward fort-building, sword-sharpening and the like, and too little toward the inexhaustible principle of the golden rule. A republican form of government is the best community attempt of all civilization thus far at a re-statement of the golden rule."

IN his baccalaureate sermon to the graduating class at the Wesleyan University, at Bloomington, Ill., delivered last Sunday, President Adams said very nearly as follows : "Ladies and gentlemen, character is the only inalienable possession. Your reputation may be tarnished by the breath of slander, but if you are right with yourself you have nothing to fear. The only thing that will make you useful and blessed in this world is character. And when you pass over the river the only thing that will save you at Heaven's gate is character."

OUR fellow-worker, David Utter, turned his back upon Chicago last Tuesday evening. Early next week he sails for Europe, where, with a friend, he will take in the wonders of the old world on wheels. His bicycling route leads through London, Paris, and possibly into Italy. That it may also lead to abounding health, much joy and renewal of the intellectual and spiritual life, and to a return home in September to be the manly, clear-headed, considerate and gentle fellow-worker that he ever has been, is the wish of his associate editors and the many friends in and out of UNITY.

LIBERAL thinkers sometimes assume that union means dishonor. When the sects come together, it is feared that truth will be compromised out of power. Men will shuffle and fear, and heroism will beg in vain at the door of their hearts. The old creeds will have a nominal assent, but the actual life will contradict them, and thus hypocrisy will become enthroned. People will become careless of distinctions between truth and falsehood, and profession will take the place of the old courage. All of which has its weight and

cannot be without its pain to human faith. But there is more than can be said in a negation. Union may implicate dishonor or may pre-figure more. And more is centered upon the growing sympathy of men than can be conceived of in an assumption of the mere weakness of the moral nature. The coming together is the necessary alliance of the race. *The division* was the mistake; and in transcending the old error we naturally cannot achieve the heroic virtues at first. But the union in the spirit is the union of nature, whose elements all work for one end. We may retain our persons, though we must give up our isolation.

H. L. T.

A PROPOS of recent discussions, a friend sends us a copy of a letter written some thirty years ago, describing a conference occasion in Milwaukee at which Doctor Bellows preached "a grand sermon in which he took the ground that the Unitarian should stand for the church universal, planting itself on broad ground, not a sect limited by creeds or articles of faith". He also said that gradually all other sects were coming to this ground, dropping their time-honored dogmas which they have so long worshiped as relics for old association's sake.

WHAT a pathetic picture of a mother's loyalty is that given us by an exchange, which tells us of a poor old woman, living four miles from a Kansas town, whose mind has been unsettled by the waywardness of an only son; a woman of some means, who has not missed a dozen times for the last three years driving four miles through rain and sleet and snow to meet the noon train, in vain expectation of meeting her son. Each day she turns away with tears in her eyes, only to return the next. A fountain can not rise higher than its source. This rill of finite patience and unyielding love flows from the fountain-head of infinite patience, the exhaustless waters of Divine love.

AN Iowa stock grower recently dehorned a hundred and twenty-five of his cattle for humanity's sake. The operation is said to be simple and comparatively painless, and he estimates that if the practice were made general it would save over a million dollars' worth of stock annually from injuries caused by horns in Iowa alone. This is worth thinking about by others than farmer-folk. Horns were doubtless once nature's beneficent provision for self-protection, but there comes a time in the order of bovine civilization when they become unnecessary, in the way, and mischievous temptations of the lower life. Who will fit this lesson to church and religious uses?

THOSE who were interested in UNITY's lists of the "Ten Greatest Novels" will be interested in the following list of the twenty novels which were most popular last year in Birmingham, England. We copy from the statistics furnished by the Birmingham Public Librarian for the pamphlet on "The Hundred Best Books", recently published at the office of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The figures show the number of times that each work was drawn from the library.

Pickwick.....	389	Bleak House.....	361
David Copperfield	303	Robinson Crusoe	294
Oliver Twist.....	278	Martin Chuzzlewit	224
Mill on the Floss.....	217	The Arabian Nights	211
Ivanhoe.....	200	Vanity Fair.....	195
East Lynne.....	188	Adam Bede.....	181
The Channings.....	143	Westward Ho.....	139
My Novel.....	137	John Inglesant.....	134
Vicar of Wakefield	133	Middlemarch.....	129
It's Never Too Late to		Father Fabian.....	119
Mend.....	121		

WE heartily second any movement looking towards a more generous and general support of the American Unitarian Association, and we should like much to see the national character of that association emphasized by national contributions. We wish that this year all the churches

within the limits of the Western Conference might pay at least a sufficient amount into the treasury to entitle them to representation two years hence. This year we believe that, besides the churches on the Pacific coast, only five of our western churches, if the *Register* list was complete, were entitled to representation at the annual meeting, viz.: the societies at Ann Arbor, Cleveland, Madison, St. Paul and All Souls church, Chicago, the latter, we believe, being the only church represented by delegates. We urge this contribution for fellowship's sake and in grateful recognition of the work done, doing and to be done by the American Unitarian Association in the west. But the poorest possible sign of adhesion to the mother-organization with headquarters in Boston is the withdrawal to any degree whatever of funds from any of her children to whom have been given more local trusts. Not less to the Western Conference but more to the American Unitarian Association is the true loyalty, possibility and privilege of all our societies. The weakest can do something. And again, our state conferences stand to us, now as always, of prime importance to the missionary work of the liberal cause. We trust there will be no abatement of generosity or zeal in this work. Each year ought to see an additional state agent in the field and more money back of all of them. We hope to see this year a fresh impetus given to the state work, particularly in Wisconsin. But the success of the state work requires in the west, as we believe, a living center in Chicago, a sympathetic, brooding mother in the Western Conference. Only our few wealthy churches can afford to make their annual pilgrimage to the national shrine at Boston. Most of our western churches must find their wider fellowship, their periodic quickening in consultation and conference-room through the help of the Western Conference if they are to find it at all. And, dear friends, there is money enough to do all this and much more. Great things await those inspired by great purposes. Great purposes, in turn, will find resources in unexpected places, will even accomplish great things with small resources.

UNITY SUNDAY CIRCLES.

IV.

THE NAME.

Fortunate will this new movement be if it can slip into being without being challenged beforehand for its name, for there is imminent danger that our baby church will die from starvation and neglect while the parents, and all its uncles and aunts, are searching for a name. Unless much grace be given, this search for a name for the liberal church in a town passes through three stages, viz.: (1) of careful consideration; (2) of earnest disputation; (3) of bitter quarreling; by which time there is nothing left to name. In most cases, by the time it has reached the third stage there will be but two contesting words, Unitarian and Universalist. The representatives of each are constrained by a sense of loyalty to their traditions, which they can not see are best honored perhaps by waiving both names and seeking the *thing* regardless of names. It is sad to think how very many communities must wait a long time yet for that which is a possibility to-day, simply because the unholy-strife for words will break out, because men will still try to atone for the absence of the *thing* by a greater insistence upon the *name* of the thing. They have little faith in God who are very unhappy because his name is not in the constitution of the United States. So they are poor Universalists who are not willing to seek after the universal brotherhood if need be without the ism, and they are very poor Unitarians who use the word to mar the unity which is the glory of the word. And so this liberal movement at the cross-roads in Liberty county, Dakota, will be neither Unitarian, Christian, nor theistic, if it insists that either or all of these words shall be test-words of organization, the shibboleths without which membership shall be either impossible or dishonest. In order to realize

any one of these words in their richest, ripest sense, the little movement must open proudly triumphant, waive all discussions about words, move the previous question and go in search of the things. Then the words will become the open doors that lead into the realities of the spiritual life. That is grandly Unitarian which reaches for a unity larger than that found in any one historic movement or than can be included in many neighborhoods under its own name. That is indeed Christian, a living branch of the imperishable vine, when with Jesus it goes in search of the lost sheep and in the lowliest way becomes a church of the holy beatitudes. Many, like Abraham Lincoln, are ready to join the "Church of the Good Samaritan", the "Mary church of the Precious Ointment", who may have hesitation concerning the use of words about which sensible men still foolishly dispute. That is indeed theistic which is touched with a reverence so rare that it shrinks from flaunting its finite syllables of the infinite and refuses to dogmatize about the pronunciation of the unutterable word.

Thus we see that one of the first things to be avoided, if the little movement is to be started, is the wrangle about titles, the dissension about words. In very many cases, perhaps in the majority of cases in the west, it will be impracticable to call the movement Unitarian, and in its earlier stages it will accomplish most in the way of a church if it does not aspire to the name of a church. We have given this generic title to the beginning of churches, "UNITY Sunday Circles". We see them springing up under many names, each reflecting local coloring. Around Chicago here we may before long have our Hinsdale, Evanston, and Winnetka "UNITY Sunday Circles", etc. Farther down the state they may have their Elmwood Unity, their Maple Grove Fraternity. Out in Iowa we may read of the "Sunday Unity" of Darwinton; from Wisconsin news may reach us of the "Sunday Club" in Carlyleville; Minnesota may have its "Channing Circle" of Parkerville, and the secretary of the Woman's Conference may be sending packages of Gannett's "Blessed be Drudgery" to the "Parker Fraternity" in Emerson, New Mexico, while the leader of the "Emerson Circle" in Brownsville, Dakota, may be writing to Meadville for a young woman to take charge of a society that after ten years of study and practice under lay leadership and occasional supply, is now ready to support a resident minister.

What's in a name? Much, too much to be disposed of hastily. So much that, like the thing, it must grow, it can not be made. Let it then be a matter of evolution rather than of manufacture.

BLAIR'S SUBSEQUENT TOOTH-ACHE BILL.

How long will it be before the people of the country will cry *Out!* on the growing shame of the Pension bills? How long before the Grand Army will itself stand up to voice for the people against their congressmen the sense that this cumulating bribe for votes has attained the dimensions of a national burden and a national curse? First, the Pension bills, natural, deserved and just. Then the Arrears of Pension law, perhaps natural and just in part, whose cost, while pending, was estimated at twenty-five to forty millions, whose actual cost to date has been \$260,000,000, or one twelfth of the whole war debt at the war's end. Next, and very lately, the Mexican Pension bill, calling probably for \$75,000,000 additional gratuity for service in a war which was essentially a war of conquest, brought on us by the South to extend the powers of slavery; and not even for real service in that war for slavery, as it provides pensions for thousands who enlisted on the eve of peace and never came in sight of a hot cannon save on a muster-ground. And now a bill, which the Senate has passed, 34 yeas to 14 nays (among the 34, 26 Republicans), which offers pension to all who served three months in the late war, and who, having to support themselves, have at any

time since become, or shall become, disabled from any cause not their fault,—a pension to continue during such disability and be proportioned to its degree, varying from \$4 to \$24 per month. In many cases this, again, would be a pension not for battle-service rendered, but for battle-service only tendered; a pension professedly not for injuries received in service, but for the usual wear and tear, the accidents and ailments and growing age of all one's after life, for a broken leg last week, or a lung trouble developing next year. From fifteen to twenty-five or fifty millions a year is Mr. Blair's estimate for this Subsequent Tooth-Ache Bill, with which compare the Arrears actual amount with the Arrears estimate.

The soldier himself ought to be the first to protest against this sinking of all distinctions between the true veteran and the bounty seeker. When will the Grand Army men stand up to say, This sort of thing has far passed the limits of gratitude for patriotism and has reached those of insult and degradation to the old soldiers?

W. C. G.

OVERSTRAINING.

To Certain of the Brethren:

BRETHREN:—We have seen that you advise our churches to forsake the Western Conference. We think our churches will value your counsel correctly—and do as they have done. You mean well, and we acknowledge it gladly; but good intention, though a flourishing tree, bears not the fruit of knowledge. But it seems to us a pity when age bears not that fruit. You have come down to us from such a gray distance; you are so old, so very old, that it seems irreverence to disturb you. But we wish to give you peace. We should remove your uneasiness and calm your unhappiness, if we could only show you that you expect too much of yourselves. What have you done ever in all your hoary past, that you should look for so much from yourselves now? When did you ever prevail, beyond spilling a little blood, which soon became the seed of crops that you expected not? Yet of you the apostle speaks in the question in Acts vii., 52. You are the Dikasts against Socrates; you are the Sanhedrim against Christ; you are the Petlines against Paul; you are the Church against the astronomers; you are Oxford against Wicliffe; you are Constance against Huss; you are the Pope against Luther; you are the Calvinists against Channing; you are the textual Unitarians against Parker; you are Mrs. Partington against the ocean. The dust of the good dame's broom will not dyke the Atlantic—not even though it be gold dust, which I have observed plentifully in the sweepings; no, nor so much as jaundice by a fleck the pleasant white foam on the shore.

Brethren, ye are very disrespectful to history, our common mother, which grieves us much, as being loyal children of the same. But it is not for us to chastise you or even reproach you; for our mother has ways of her own to punish offspring that dissatisfy her, and at the same time to turn them to account; one way of which is to set them up as marks for moral warning to the future, as already she has set up the Dikasts and the Sanhedrim and the Petlines and the ecclesiastics against Galileo, and all the rest; and men point the finger at them and shake the head. Verily the textual Unitarians, in their wrath, did withdraw from a bench if Parker sat down on it; and now their children do publish his writings and place a picture of him in their temple. So our mother chastiseth. Give better heed to her, we pray you. Fare ye well. J. V. B.

D. C. HEATH & Co., Boston, are about to issue a new edition of Professor Crosby's "Common Minerals and Rocks." Why would not that be a good book for the ministerial tramp to put in his pocket when he goes in search of a vacation? We particularly commend it to those who want to base their theology on a rock.

Contributed Articles.

THE TWO PATHS.

Strike hands—and part? But no, *not so*,—
To the same goal our paths must go;
Though while yon mountain place you tread,
My feet through blossoming lanes are led.

I name the name your lips confess
In Love and Truth and Righteousness;
Blame me not, friends, that still for me
Made warm and human Faith must be.

O, not to all is given to bear
The higher, rarer atmosphere
Of the Eternal Silences,
Where only noblest souls may press.

Only the prophet-soul with God
The veiled peak of Sinai trod;
Low on the plain the multitude
For some clear message waiting stood.

For you—enough the Spirit's flame,
My lips the spoken word must frame:
The Cross you do not need, must be
A staff and a support for me.

Then not "Farewell" 'twixt me and you,
Rather the nobler word *Adieu*—
With God we walk or here or there,
God with us—for us each his care!

* *

MRS. STOWE'S INFLUENCE ON LITERATURE.

[We give below one of the last words which the lamented Professor Fraser gave to the press. His work, like that of all true literary workers, was quiet, undemonstrative and directly felt by but few people. And still his enthusiasm for letters and his power of communicating the same, his fine critical judgment and his wholesome antagonism to all that was vapid and shallow in current publications, working upon the profitable material offered him in the young minds of the Chicago university, the Chicago "Athenæum" and the many private literary classes which he directed, have made him a real power for culture in Chicago for many years. Equipped as he was with the best culture of Scotch universities, he gave in unstinted measure through many or all the humble avenues that were presented to him. In his untimely death there is left a vacancy which we fear will not be readily filled.—ED.]

I cannot help thinking that justice has never yet been done to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. "Uncle Tom's Cabin", of course, was received with enthusiasm all the world over on the occasion of its first publication, but the excitement and conditions of the stirring days of which it was a conspicuous outcome have passed away, and although still popular it has been, I fear, relegated by the masses to the dusty shelves wherein the so-called classics are preserved. All the same, Mrs. Stowe's great novel must always be reckoned a most potential factor in the development of modern poetry and fiction. Up to the time of its publication the influence of Scott and the romantic school reigned supreme, and novelists and poets had recourse to the musty records of gray antiquity for the materials out of which to weave stories and poems with which to interest the public. By "Uncle Tom's Cabin", however, Mrs. Stowe reminded the world that he who would most deeply move the heart of humanity has no need to rummage amid mediæval relics and the musty legends of a forgotten past, but has around him, at his very door, beneath his very eyes, abundance, and more than abundance of material, by the artistic manipulation of which he can touch popular sympathies. On every side of us, Mrs.

Stowe reminded the world, are wrongs to be redressed, great corruptions to be removed, dramatic incidents of the most moving kind transpiring before our eyes in every lane and hovel, and catching the inspiration there immediately issued from the European press a vast number of what I might call poems and novels of humanity. Tom Hood wrote his "Bridge of Sighs", "Song of the Shirt" and "Laborer's Lay"; Mrs. Browning, her "Cry of the Children"; Charles Kingsley, his "Alton Locke"; Charles Dickens and Charles Reade, those novels in which they have emphasized certain great grievances which were crushing the life and brightness out of society; and Victor Hugo wrote that greatest fiction of modern times, "Les Misérables". This is the great work which this noble woman, to my poor thinking, has accomplished in literature. She struck off the fetters from the slave and from imaginative art, and redirected the imagination and creative powers and sympathies of the novelist and the poet into fresh, wholesome, pure and lofty channels. And, *à propos* of "Uncle Tom's Cabin", we can't help feeling at times that in fiction we have fallen upon evil times, though there is hope in the conviction that the novel is merely in process of evolution to a purer, stronger and nobler form of imaginative narrative art. Contrast with the sublime and unselfish motives of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and in a less degree of "Dred", the petty aims, the dilettante ideals, the finical style of most contemporary novels. One writer spends his force in photographing little tricks of speech and sentiment as illustrative of differences of character and manner between European and American girls; another exhausts his genius and his subject in painting Scotch sunsets and the dying agonies of salmon on Scotch heather; a third builds up ingenious trifles like houses of Chinese cards to develop impossible plots; a fourth descends into the gutters and the shambles, and dignifies his degrading and demoralizing efforts by the name of realism; where is the great work, inspired and sublimed by a noble love of humanity and honest, whole-souled desire to elevate the race, and do something to hasten the coming of that divine event to which the whole creation moves—and what of eternal interest and veracity and moment is there in your *Madcap Violets*, or *Lorna Doones*, or *Washington Squares* to be for a moment compared with *Jean Valjean* or *Uncle Tom*? When Time, that only impartial critic, delivers her verdict, it is not your creators of feudal cut-throats or marauding barons, red-haired monsters or della-cruscan beauties that will loom up most grandly out of the mists and smoke of the 19th century, but the men and women who have exerted their great genius towards the amelioration and progress of the race; and among them all I do not think a single figure will show more distinctly—more grandly—a holy rapture inspiring and making beautiful her homely face—pure, white, and stainless—her memory embalmed in the hearts of untold thousands—her labors and life occupying one of the noblest pages of humanity—than the figure of that great novelist, and greater woman, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe.

JOHN FRASER.

CHICAGO.

Correspondence.

EDITOR OF UNITY:—Please allow me to enter a protest against the spirit of illiberalism manifested in the note from "Los Angeles Tourist" (UNITY, June 5th, page 210). Is Unitarianism organized merely to make inroads in the orthodox churches? If "Tourist" will report the inroads Doctor Fay is making in the ranks of the *sinner*s of California, tell how many he is inducing to "swear off" from evil habits, and join him in battling for righteousness, he may indeed have somewhat to boast of. If Unitarianism stands for nothing better than the unsettling of the faith of even Catholic church members, 'twere better that she

write "Ichabod" on her door posts, and invite Bro. Gopal Vinayak Joshee, of Bombay, to give her lessons in the ethics of Christian courtesy. I do not believe the dogmas promulgated in the church creeds; but if their members do, and are trying to live up to them, I am glad to aid them all in my power, and join them in the fight against sin and unrighteousness.

CHICAGO, June 8.

J. E. WOODHEAD.

EDITOR OF UNITY:—I write you again because I see you printed my other letter. It looked first rate in print, better than it did on paper. I am glad you fixed it up with the right capitals and stops. I wonder if people won't think I am quite a chap to write such a fine letter? I was going to tell you about what I knew about doctrines. I have heard of dogmas and doctrines in our family since I can remember. I have seen folks get mad as could be disputing about Jesus and the Bible and heaven and hell. I don't like that last place, but sometimes I think there is no hotter place than where they are discussing doctrines. Now isn't it funny that real good people get so hot over these things and dispute about things not one of them understands? At any rate I never could get much out of their talk. General Rumbler is the biggest arguer in our parish. He argues everything. The boys say he'll start up an argument with Peter about which way he shall enter heaven, frontwards or backwards. Now can't you preachers get at something a fellow can understand? I have heard my father talk and talk about election and free grace and inspiration and divinity of Jesus and atonement, and never could see what they had to do with keeping a fellow straight at home or at school, or helping him do right. I wish you preachers would buckle down to business and help a fellow who don't find it very easy to be what my good mother calls a saint. I ain't no saint. What bothers me is, supposing the Bible is inspired, what then? what has that to do with me? I don't read it much, but I have heard it read and just as quick as lightning I know when it means me, and that is all I care about. I prick up and try to do better when it strikes real hard. Perhaps that is inspiration. But then it don't always do that and then I suppose it isn't inspired. Is that the way it is, Mr. Editor? Just so about Jesus. If he had to go through just what other fellows have to, and he came out all right, then he just takes hold on me and makes me wish I was like him. I have got that far in doctrine, but I can't see much farther. But then General Rumbler tells me I am too pert and had better at present keep quiet. But one day I up and told him I didn't give a cent for all the creeds. I know it was not quite right, for I did not understand them. Yes, I have read them in the old prayer book belonging to my uncle, who goes to the Episcopal church. Now there is another thing. I have gone with him to church and prayed and prayed and said out loud the creed and did not know what I said. What a queer thing religion is, anyhow. Is there anything straight about it? I asked my uncle if he believed it. He said not all. "Then why do you say it?" "Oh, there is a sense in which it may be true." I get all mixed up.

Then our own parish has got into a dispute over its creed. Some want one thing, some another. We are getting mixed up. I don't exactly know what some of the old folks want to do with the Bible. It seems as if it sometimes was Bible and sometimes wasn't Bible. And Jesus is just in the same way. Sometimes he is divine and sometimes he isn't. Oh, I do pity Jesus, the way the people seem to abuse him. I just like him as I imagine him. It seems mixed. But our preacher don't seem a bit mixed. He comes right out and says that the Bible, on the whole, is "a grand and noble book". These are his words. And he said "it was just as much from man and from God as any other book and in the same sense as any other book". These are his words. I have them right, because the sermon was so good the town paper printed it. He added,

"Its spirit is that of righteousness." He said something like that about Jesus and us boys understood him.

I talked with him the Wednesday after he preached that great sermon, and he said to me, "Live as the Bible in its prophets and New Testament would have you live—that is, do right." He is awful earnest, that preacher, and he talks just as big and as earnest to us boys as he does to the old folks. Now, you preachers better get down to a "do right" creed, is what one boy thinks. Our preacher said he had ideas about the "special place of the Bible and Jesus in the world's religious life", which help him much but which a boy could hardly take in. "But", said he, "do right and you will find yourself helped in all these things. I'll tell you his text for the great sermon. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." I agree with our preacher and it is just what I was trying to think myself. You need not laugh, us boys think—and a mighty sight too. We have ears and heads and we keep the ears open and the head busier than some folks think. Mr. Editor, please fix this letter up as you did the last one, so folks won't know about my mistakes.

Yours respectfully,

JOHNNY BLUNT.

UNREST, May 17.

The Study Table.

POETRY BY THE MONTH.

April. May. June. (Through the Year with the Poets). Edited by Oscar Fay Adams. Cloth, 16mo., each volume 75 cents. D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.

One who loves poetry must be impressed anew with the appearance of each volume of this series, with the fitness of the idea of such a series, and also with the thought of the possibility of at least *approaching* an ideal result in the attempt to prepare one. Now that over one-half of the series has appeared, it seems safe to speak of the work in a more general way than there would have been warrant for doing at an earlier date. As a collection of verse in celebration of the months it deserves much praise, notwithstanding it includes some pieces not worth printing in *any* form, some others of quite doubtful merit, poetically considered, and still others, which, good as they are, are very slightly related to any month. Mr. Adams has done admirably in endeavoring to present so fair a proportion of later verses; he has usually been judicious in choosing the "standard" pieces, and he has not overdone the presentation of British productions. It is desirable in a collection of this kind that, if possible, every climate under the sun shall be represented, and certainly that every singer who has produced anything worthy in celebration of the months shall have a place. We are sure that not every climate is represented, and quite as sure that not every deserving singer on the months has a place in this anthology. We think that, had the editor's readings been carried outside of a certain class of publications and beyond a certain circle of personal friends, he would have succeeded in gathering many poems of excellent quality by writers who are not represented, and so would have enhanced the value of the collection on the score of variety; while, had he omitted all pieces which bear but slightly upon the months, and placed in their stead others directly related thereto, he would have greatly improved the quality of the work as a *month* collection.

The fifth number, April, opens happily with Robert Browning's "The Year's at the Spring", and closes quite as happily with Dr. Holmes's vivid, sentimental lines in which April

"In tears and blushes sighs herself away,
And hides her cheek beneath the flowers of May."

In this volume are brought together many of the poems which illustrate best the quickening of Nature which distinguishes April from the other months, about which are grouped poems descriptive of the fourth month's many phases. The larger number of the April favorites of most readers appear, besides not a few pieces, either in whole or in part, little known, at least in this country. The best of the more recent productions are: "April", by Mary Elizabeth Blake, of Boston; "April", by Henry Sylvester Cornwell, of New London, Conn.; "The Mystery of Spring", by Charlotte Fiske Bates, of Cambridge, Mass.; "An April Aria", by George Parsons Lathrop, of New York; "Spring is coming", by Francis William Bourdillon, of London, Eng.; "In Holy Week at Genoa", by Oscar Wilde, of England; "April", by Elizabeth Akers Allen, of Woodbridge, N. J.; "April" [contributed to the volume], by Jane Goodwin Austin, of Boston; "The First Spring Day", by John Todhunter, of England; "April", by L. Frank Tooker, of New York; "April Shadows", by (the late) Menella Bute Smedley, of England; "A Ballade of April Days" [original contribution], by Alanson Bigelow Houghton, of Cambridge, Mass.; "Spring Song", by Robert Williams Buchanan, of England; and "April", by Dinah Mulock-Craik, of England. The judgment used in selecting from poems more widely known than these, and by more distinguished authors, for the rest of the book, is very good—better, we think, than the judgment used in selecting unpoetical pieces (usually unpoetical in subject rather than in treatment) from minor verse-makers. One hundred and twelve authors are represented in the 137 pages, eighteen or more of whom had not been represented previously.

"May" is a little larger volume than either of its predecessors; it numbers, apart from indexes, 143 pages, and contains 147 poems by 107 authors. There are original pieces from Mrs. Mary E. Blake, Willis Boyd Allen, William H. Hayne, Mrs. Jane G. Austin, and Mrs. M. G. Meteyard, the best of which, to our view, are those by Mrs. Blake and Mrs. Meteyard: the latter's contribution is, indeed, one of the best things in the volume. We notice, among the reprints, many of the "old favorites", both ancient and modern, from both sides of the sea. The criticism as to the insertion of too-slightly-related pieces is eminently applicable here, where fifteen or more selections might be taken out without loss to the book as a May collection. In two instances, if no more, the authors are guilty of grammatical error, a thing not to be expected of such writers as Edwin Arnold and Robert K. Weeks. Now and then, too, a case occurs of lack of poetic merit in such a degree as suggests the inquiry *why* the editor could have consented to use the effort. Among recent productions which are creditable alike to author and editor are: "At Whitsuntide", by Helen G. Cone; "May", by Mary E. Blake; "May", by Caroline A. Mason; "In Maytime", by Anne Whitney; "When Beeches Brighten Early May", by John Vance Cheney; "May", by "H. H."; "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" by John Stuart Blackie; "May Morning", by Celia Thaxter; "Maytime", by Bayard Taylor; "May", by Longfellow; "Dark Spring", by R. B. W. Noel, and "Song of the Princess May", by Eleanora Perry. But there are lines in some of the other productions worthy of high praise.

"June" is quite as good, on the whole, as any which has preceded it; it embraces 133 pages of verse, selected from, or contributed by, 104 writers, and affords desirable variety not only in authorship, but in subject and treatment as well. The representation of older verse-makers is subordinated, we think justly, to that of later ones—and yet it cannot be complained that a fair share of space is not given the old favorites, for here are Wordsworth, Herrick, Landor, Spenser, Longfellow, Lowell, Bryant, Holmes, Tennyson, Turner, Mortimer Collins, Stoddard, Clare, Drake, Dennis, Browning, and others. The shortest selections are not so good as usual; indeed, several of

them possess little merit. Among those pieces which deserve particular attention are the stanzas from Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis"; Antoinette Alcott Bassett's "On the Edge of the Marsh"; James Berry Bensen's "A Sudden Shower"; Mary E. Blake's "June" and "To June"; Mary Frances Butts's "A Quest"; Helen Gray Cone's "Evening Primroses", "The Dandelions" and "A Yellow Pansy"; Edgar Fawcett's "Clover", "June", "To An Oriole", and "A Humming Bird"; R. W. Gilder's "Summer Twilights" and "On the Wild Rose Tree"; Edward Jenner's "Signs of Rain" (an "old favorite"); James B. Kenyon's "When Clover Blooms"; H. W. Longfellow's "June" and "A Summer Day by the Sea"; Augustus M. Lord's "Boating"; J. R. Lowell's most popular lines from "Under the Willows" and "The Vision of Sir Launfal"; Richard K. Munkittrick's "Here" and "A June Lily"; Alfred Norris's "Summer"; Arthur Reed Ropes's "On the Bridge"; Edith Matilda Thomas's "Delay", and David A. Wasson's "Joy Month". There are fine lines in many other pieces, but we think none average so high as these. Paul H. Hayne's pretty dancer, "June" which opens the volume, is creditable, however. The original productions are not especially deserving. These are ten in number, and are written by the following named: Rev. Horatio Nelson Powers, Miss Charlotte Fiske Bates, Richard Kendall Munkittrick, Clinton Scollard, Ernest W. Shurtleff, George P. Lathrop, Miss Florence S. Brown, Mrs. Jane G. Austin, Charles Miner Thompson and Alanson B. Houghton. The collection contains but little poetry, but is rich in poetical and other conceits, pleasant strains of sentiment, and more or less graphic description. The index-element is as conspicuous and highly satisfactory as usual.

E. R. C.

The Some.

THE VETERAN.

I saw a veteran to-day
With hobbling foot, and staff to stay,
In slow march by the window stray.

"The rank?" There was no epaulet;
Some humble rank that privates get:
The look said, *hero by brevet*.

"The regiment?" I only know
It takes the front where'er they go:
The face is all the badge they show.

"No colors?" None that I could see;
Except the gray locks waving free,
Like shot-torn banners greeting me.

"In service where?" How could I guess?
No roll of victories marred the dress,
But eyes were full of field success.

"And scars, or maim,—an empty sleeve?"
I saw the smile that sufferings leave,
And weary days and nights achieve.

"And all alone—no comrade-brother?"
Alone, but loved beyond all other—
For she is some one's dear old mother.

W. C. G.

SCATTERED BROADCAST.

"Please, marm, what shall I do with these papers from the library rack?" "Leave them upon the dining room table and Auntie Thoughtful will look them over."

Hannah tossed them down, muttering, "Trash, only fit to kindle the kitchen fire."

"Now, Auntie, tell me to whom these shall be sent, while I fold and direct. I never thought about sending them

away. I did not realize but every one had as many papers as we have." Auntie Thoughtful smiled. "There is something very sweet in being remembered. My son never missed a week but he sent me some paper." She turned away to hide her tears. Husband and son had both "gone before". The old home had been sold, and Auntie had come to live with those next dearest.

"Here are the two Eastern papers full of local news, from both your home and your husband's; send these to your sister in California, who shares your interest in the old home news."

"Number one", said Mrs. M., as she tossed it into a basket.

"Your aged father does not take the New Hampshire paper. He would grow young again to read the news from his native state; send it to him, niece, and don't miss a single week, for I'm sure he will learn to watch for it." "Why, Auntie, I wonder I never thought of this before." "I wonder, too, but it's not too late to begin. I have done this all my life in my humble way, when I had to count every cent that went out for postage. Your uncle used to remonstrate with me; we couldn't afford it, he said. It was a great pleasure to me, and I hoped I was putting rounds into my heavenly ladder. Here is the *Homestead*—half farming, half home receipts—those new married friends on the frontier would find help from it and get glimpses of the outer world. Put in the sermon, 'Blessed be Drudgery', and 'Co-education of Husband and Wife'; they may cheer and strengthen. For myself, I beg the *Christian Register* and the *UNITY* to give Aunt Sarah, who is hungering and thirsting for liberal thought, but whose lines are cast in a strict, rigid community."

So the good work progressed. The outgo was ten cents. Who can tell the income?

S. M. B.

DANDELIONS.

Upon a showery night and still,
Without a word or warning,
A trooper band surprised the hill,
And held it in the morning.
We were not waked by bugle-notes,
No cheer our dreams invaded,
And yet, at dawn, their yellow coats
On the green slopes paraded.

We careless folk the deed forgot;
Till one day, idly walking,
We marked upon the self-same spot
A croud of veterans talking.
They shook their trembling heads and gray
With pride and noiseless laughter;
When, well-a-day! they blew away,
And ne'er were heard of after.

—St. Nicholas.

THE *Fraternal Age* for February contains some admirable suggestions on how to spend "Evenings at Home". Among other good games mentioned is the following, entitled "Going West". "Company all seated around the room, and the one who is to begin says: 'I am going West and I am going to take with me some money.' (He can mention any object whatever.) The next one says, 'I am going West, and I am going to take with me some money and—my trunk.' His neighbor says, 'I am going West, and am going to take with me some money, my trunk and—a span of horses.' And so on around, each one repeating in order all the articles that have already been mentioned, and adding one more. When any one forgets what comes next, or places the article in the wrong order, he must drop out of the play, the point of the game being to see who can remain in longest."

"KINDNESS, like grain, increases with sowing."

Notes from the Field.

WISCONSIN UNIVERSALISTS.—The spirit of prophecy came upon the Universalists at their Wisconsin State Convention in abounding measure, when the following declaration of principles, presented by Rev. L. J. Dinsmore, was adopted and spread upon the minutes. We like these principles that are prophetic, and declarations that recognize the gravity and sanctity of the great issues of society. This is "bearing testimony" after the manner of the Quakers, a manner which our Unitarian conferences will do well to copy more in the future than they have done in the past:

The Universalists of Wisconsin assembled for the second time in convention in the city of Stoughton, after an interval of twenty-seven years, desire to reaffirm their devotion to the spirit and substance of the statement of principles then put forth. They rejoice that the elements of that wide and enlightened philanthropy and those lively human sympathies which have done so much to ameliorate the condition of our whole humanity, are still active and are exercising an ever broadening and deepening influence on human hearts and lives.

They realize that if the Convention twenty-seven years ago had reason to felicitate itself upon the "many signs * * of the spread and growth of liberal sentiments in religion, giving evidence that man * * is learning to interpret the character of God", those who to-day bear aloft the standard of apostolic faith have every reason to be still more encouraged, and to cry aloud, "Brethren, the night is far spent, the day is at hand!" They reaffirm their conviction that a day of peace is coming up the steep of time, when wars and injustice shall be ended, and honor, justice and truth sway alike the destinies of nations and of individuals. And they congratulate the people that this land has indeed become the home of the free and the abiding place of liberty.

They cherish the hope that the Republic is entering upon a new and more resplendent career of liberty, honor, justice and fraternity. And as harmonious with that career they welcome every effort to bring the people of the land more closely together as one in laws, in name, in civilization and in destiny. Whatever purifies our civil service, uplifts our political system and puts a godly fear into the halls of legislation, they hail and receive as hopeful forces, closely related to the work of religion.

They desire to make no uncertain utterance upon those great questions that have arisen to demand the attention of the best minds of this day, and would reaffirm the repeated utterances of state and national gatherings that intemperance is a blight and a shame, and its suppression essential to all moral and religious progress. They sound anew the note of danger, and summon all friends of humanity and all lovers of the merciful Christ to stand firm and united, actively engaged in the work of human reclamation, redemption and education. They note with gratitude that the morals of the land are slowly rising, the tide mark of manhood is higher, and habits of temperance more generally practiced. The future is hopeful.

The movement to secure equal and impartial suffrage for men and women receives their hearty support; and they rejoice that some progress has been made in the effort to secure justice for the mothers, wives and sisters of the land.

They understand the gravity of the problems of labor and capital that have been thrust upon the attention of all thoughtful and humane people, and they express the conviction that the only possible solution of these vexed economic questions will be found in the wise and thoughtful application of the Christian doctrine of the brotherhood.

Twenty-seven years have passed and what changes they have witnessed! Not a crouching slave to lift his shackled hands to heaven in a hopeless prayer for freedom! Long silent the grim artillery of heaven's vengeance on the crime of the ages! Peace, order, liberty, toleration! The present is the prophecy of the future, and in the better days ahead, those who love that faith once delivered to the saints, and consecrated to us by the hearts and lives of the fathers, can still find abundant room and occasion for the exercise of their best thoughts and gifts.

WOMEN'S WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.—The quarterly meeting of the directors of the W. W. U. C. was held at the central office on Thursday, June 10. Present: Mrs. West, President; Mrs. Dow, Mrs. Gordon, Mrs. Hilton, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Marean and Miss Graves. The minutes of the last meeting were read by Mrs. Gordon; the treasurer's report by Mrs. Hilton; both accepted. Communications from absent members of the Board were read by the secretary. These were strongly expressive of interest in the work of the Conference. Mrs. Cole hoped that the \$1,000 mark hitherto aimed at, but

not reached, may this year be passed. In accordance with her suggestion and the expressed wish of others, that all money used in the work of the Conference should be credited on its books, it was decided to recommend the various Post-office Mission workers to keep an account of their receipts and expenditures and send the same to the treasurer to be incorporated in the annual report, that the women's work might be more adequately represented. Mrs. Learned, in her letter, makes a plea for earnest study and earnest work, thinking that we should be eager to search out the foundations of our faith. In answer to the inquiry, "What are the duties of directors?" the secretary was instructed to send copies of the by-law in which they are defined. It was voted that a committee of two be appointed by the chair to confer with the executive committee of the Western Unitarian Conference in regard to the expenses of the room for the coming year. Mrs. Hilton and Mrs. Dow were appointed. A letter from Miss French, relating to the Post-office Mission in Wisconsin, was read. The secretary was directed to aid and encourage the new workers in that state as suggested by Miss French. It was voted that the number of Unity Mission tracts to be purchased, and the amount of money to be expended in postage stamps during the summer, be left to the discretion of the secretary; also, that a list of annual members be printed in the report of each quarter's meeting. After passing a vote of thanks to Mr. Potter for the gift of seven copies of "Beyond the Veil", and to Mr. Williams for a contribution of \$1.15 to the Post-office Mission to help in paying for Mr. Savage's and Mr. Chadwick's sermons, the meeting adjourned.

MARY H. GRAVES, Sec.

BOSTON NOTES.—News comes to us from Japan that the Buddhists there are holding meetings to consider an active propagation of their faith, and have decided to send missionaries forthwith to Europe and America.—Rev. Phillips Brooks, our liberal Episcopalian minister, conducts at his own house a club of young men from various denominations, and encourages exercises in elocution, singing and violin playing, and is about allowing the members the use of a church building for a little drama. The club will soon have a cheerful supper at Young's hotel. Brother Brooks is proud of his club, and he could not do better work.—The Monday Club of Unitarian ministers have bidden farewell to their old place of meeting—the Unitarian library room—with expressions of thanks for the many courtesies extended to them by the A. U. A. June 21 the club will have a reunion in the elegant library room of the new building.—The east looks with much sympathy upon the late experiences of the Western Conference in the effort to express its general religious beliefs. We think that now, still more than in our fathers' day, the beautiful temple of Unitarianism is large enough to contain all sincere, truth-loving men and women and organizations. We think that as each society should be sole judge of its own expressions of faith, the local or general Conferences should not dictate to societies. The east will avoid taking sides with either party disputing, but will believe that harmony in practical work may co-exist with an agreement to differ in some religious or other opinions.—The young people of our city churches, acting by delegates, are already planning active theatre preaching here next autumn.—Hereabouts the Grand Army Posts on Decoration Day seemed to take to Unitarian churches as rendezvous for sermons and addresses. Citizen soldiers grow always into men of wide, liberal views of the world and its uses.

MEADVILLE, PA.—Our thoughts this week constantly revert to Meadville. It is the week of prophecy, when the student is being transformed into the missionary or the minister. Four young men this week will regretfully turn their backs upon the school, and, we trust, will hopefully turn their faces upon the world, their future field. Two of them, Mr. Phalen and Mr. Mason, already have their constituencies awaiting them, the former at Wilton,

N. H., the latter at Union City, Pa. The two others, Messrs. Frost and Schultz, will, ere this reaches our readers, be standing ready in the market-place. Where is the waiting field? May the spirit of God be in the hearts of each and all of them, in such abounding measure that they will dare face difficulties and honor the past by working for the future.—In addition to the usual anniversary exercises, we believe the church here celebrates this week its semi-centennial. Many, like ourselves, not present in body, will recall gratefully past labors and past privileges enjoyed in that modest brick church on the Diamond.

WESTERN UNITARIAN S. S. SOCIETY.—At the regular Board meeting for June, which was held on the 7th inst., it was voted to have upon the table at headquarters files of other publications besides the *Christian Register* and *UNITY*. Friends wishing to refer to *The Unitarian*, *Our Best Words*, *The Index*, or *Lend a Hand*—the latter is E. E. Hale's new periodical—can find them here. A committee was appointed to consult with the Executive Board of the Conference and the Women's Conference for completing the joint business arrangements of the coming year. The society purposes publishing a series of small four-page tracts for free distribution to the children of its Sunday-schools. Much careful work and thoughtful adaptation will be represented in these, and the first discussion relative to them was a part of the business of the meeting.

HUNGARY.—Miss Caroline Richmond, the fame of whose name has already preceded her, is reporting in the columns of the *Register* a most interesting visit among the Unitarians of Kolozsvár. Here is the most ancient home of the Unitarian faith. Here the Unitarians have their college, churches, and a history over three hundred years old. Professor Kovacs, the president of the college, well known to many American Unitarians, acted as host during the visit. Miss Richmond says, "We are our country's pioneers as feminine travelers in Transylvania." She recommends others to follow their footsteps: "And if they chance to be Unitarians, they will call it the very cream of their European journey."

INDIANA.—The Unitarian State Missionary delivered an address to the prisoners at the Northern Indiana state prison, at Michigan City, Wednesday, June 9, the occasion being the fourth annual visitation of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union to carry flowers and furnish reading matter to the prisoners. At the close of the exercises he was chosen a member of a committee of five, to see what can be done to assist prisoners after leaving the institution. There are now seven hundred prisoners in this place.

ST. JOSEPH, MO.—The corner-stone of the new Unitarian church was recently laid at this place, the Jewish Rabbi making the prayer of consecration and an appropriate speech, and a layman, William H. Floyd, an appropriate address. The society has always manifested commendable self-reliance, and we have no doubt they will carry to successful completion the new church in their pastorless condition.

CHICAGO.—Unity church and the Church of the Messiah celebrated their Flower Sunday on June 13 at a different hour from that of the morning service, Unity church using the service in the "Unity Festival" book, and the Church of the Messiah a special service of their own. Next Sunday the Third church will hold their Floral Service, at the regular church hour. All Souls church will close the season with the Floral Service on the last Sunday of June.

WARREN, Ill.—At the last visit of Secretary Effinger to this hopeful post, arrangements were made for monthly services for six months, and about a hundred dollars was promptly subscribed on the spot to defray expenses. The audience was interested and large.

ALGONA, Ia.—The pastor, Rev. Ida C. Hultin, recently exchanged pulpits with Mr. Simmons, of Minneapolis.

Unity Church-Door Pulpit.

SERIES III.

NO. 8.

THE BASIS OF RELIGIOUS FELLOWSHIP.

A SERMON PREACHED MAY 30, 1886, BY J. C. LEARNED.

PUBLISHED BY THE CHURCH OF THE UNITY, ST. LOUIS.

"What of it? 'Tis a figure, a symbol, say:
A thing's sign; now for the thing signified."

—Browning.

"A sect skilfully organized, trained to utter one cry, combined to cover with reproach whoever may differ from themselves, to drown the free expression of opinion by denunciations of heresy,—such a sect is as perilous and palsying to the intellect as the Inquisition."—Channing.

"Fifty years hence we shall believe in the victorious power of goodness."—Stopford Brooke.

The recent conference of Western Unitarian churches will pass into our records as a memorable one, both for the earnestness of its convictions and the decisiveness of its action. To those who have watched the course of Unitarian thought the points at issue were tolerably clear from their first appearance; but to new-comers within our fellowship, and to outsiders generally, something needs to be said and our history re-stated, that they may appreciate the problem with which we have to deal.

In the first place let it be clearly understood that the conference was divided, not primarily on a question of theology, but on a question of fellowship. It was not a question what the churches could individually or collectively assert or consent to with regard to the great doctrines of Christianity or religion. There was no doubt in the mind of any person present that the churches represented, that the delegates present accepted, the belief in God, worship and immortality; that they acknowledge the supreme character of the Christian religion. Without any shadow of doubt the great majority of all those present would individually and unhesitatingly declare all these convictions—each, of course, with his own interpretation.

But the question was, Shall we willingly and knowingly exclude any good man from the fellowship of this conference, who for any cause hesitates to announce himself upon these points, or who says of any of them, I cannot accept it? Moreover, shall we put ourselves in the position of being unable to invite to our conference any society that does not fulfill all the conditions which we, the majority, might be able to endorse? The answer to both these questions was a decided, No. I believe the answer was rightly given, whether from rational or historic grounds; and it will be my object now to state those grounds as I see them.

The whole issue lay wrapped up in two harmless looking resolutions. These two neatly made packages concealed all the dynamite of the Cincinnati Conference. One, prepared by Judge McCrary, brought by Mr. Sunderland, and presented by Mr. Clute, was: "*Resolved, that the primary object of this conference is to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity.*" What creature, we might ask, could carry a more innocent face than this resolution? How could any man or woman brought up in the Christian religion, or taking the Unitarian name, consent to record a vote against so fair a proposition? And it must be said that the secretary's movement under this guise brought a certain pain and confusion to some not fully seeing the intention within it, not familiar with the use already made of this phraseology.

The story is told of a man who, when cornered in an argument, refused to admit that two and two made four until he knew *how it was to be used* by his opponent. It was the

use to be made of this resolution which drew opposition to it. Therefore it was that Mr. Gannett moved the following substitute: "*Resolved, that the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all who wish to join it to help establish truth and righteousness and love in the world.*" There were annexed to this resolution two others providing for theological statements to be drawn up from time to time by a committee as the beliefs of the majority, not binding upon any who dissented from them. But the test of the conference position lay with the resolutions already given.

Which then of these two statements will the conference choose? Which will best represent its spirit and purpose? It is plainly a question of phraseology; it is a question of more than phraseology. Will Unitarianism limit itself to include only those in its fellowship and work who call themselves Christians; or will it welcome any, irrespective of the name they wear, who have the right spirit—any "who wish to join us to help establish truth and righteousness and love in the world"?

To present the matter fully and clearly to the conference, so that all might see the significance of their vote, much time was given. Rarely has so earnest a debate been marked with greater courtesy. Finally, when those who were chiefly responsible for bringing on this issue, seeing their case lost, would gladly have seen the whole matter tabled or indefinitely postponed, after various amendments and substitutes were urged, a square vote was reached. Mr. Clute's resolution was lost. Mr. Gannett's was adopted by a count of more than three to one.

I. So much for the business. And now let us first consider what rational and historic ground there is for our choosing a religious fellowship based on the aim to "establish truth, righteousness and love in the world", rather than "to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity". Some would say that for them these two objects are one and the same—the terms are synonymous. But are they? Are the terms equally clear? Which phraseology is the larger, which the limiting? Let us look a little closely at the word Christianity. I said many years ago, that, if men wished to retain that term with any comfort to themselves, they must hold it loosely, they must not press it too hard. They must not make it compulsory for any to accept it, nor derogatory for any to decline it, nor deny it to any who claim it. In short, they must keep it out of controversy. But this has been impossible. Perhaps no word has been oftener defined. That fact makes it hard to define; and it proves that there is nothing obvious or self-evident in the meaning of that word.

Every sect defines it differently. The warfare over what Jesus was, over the words he spoke, over the requirements of his religion, has rent all Christendom with wrangling debate. To define any thing is to classify it, to put it by itself, or to name its distinguishing characteristic. Now to name the principles or beliefs which Christianity has in common with other religions is not to define Christianity: we must name those things which are *peculiar* to Christianity. This leads us to ask, are those things which distinguish Christianity from all other faiths anything like so important as those things which it holds in common with other faiths? The belief in God is certainly not peculiar

to Christianity; nor the belief in worship, nor the belief in duty, nor the belief in immortality. Unitarians have generally accepted these beliefs, but they are ages older than Christianity, and have had their place in every religion. Some suppose the doctrines of the trinity, of the incarnation, of the atonement, of total depravity, of the forgiveness for sin through the sacrifice of the Son of God, of salvation through blood, the resurrection of the body and the eternal perdition of the impenitent, are the distinguishing ones. Yet Unitarians from the first repudiated these doctrines, and have commonly said they were pure heathenism rather than pure Christianity. Latterly there has been a tendency among the latitudinarian writers of various schools to formulate a definition of Christianity about *the person of Jesus Christ*. They say Christianity is not an elaborate scheme of salvation, nor any particular belief about Christ; it is belief in Christ. Christianity stands or falls on this simple confession of *trust in Jesus*. "The Christian name (says Mr. F. E. Abbot), whatever else it may include, necessarily includes faith in Jesus as the Christ of God. Any other use of the name is an abuse of it. 'The lordship and divine authority of Jesus Christ', 'belief in Jesus as the Messiah', is the distinguishing doctrine of Christianity."

A few Unitarians have been disposed to make this the fundamental fact of Christianity. It seemed to be implied in that constitution-preamble of the National Conference of Unitarians organized in New York city in 1865; which, though then adopted, has been a trouble to us ever since. Its adoption in another year led to the organization of the Free Religious Association of Boston. It finally and irrevocably barred the doors of the denomination to such men as Francis E. Abbot, William J. Potter, O. B. Frothingham, Samuel Johnson, John Weiss, Samuel Longfellow, David A. Wasson, and William C. Gannett. It was a conservative reaction, carefully planned against the influence—yes, against the *victory* already won, for those who had eyes to see,—of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker.

At the same time the writings of Channing and others of the Unitarian fathers were scattered thick with declarations that Christianity was none of all these things. Christianity was an individual *aim* rather than an external *claim*; it was not a creed, but a life. By preaching Christ, said Channing, "We are to understand his *religion* rather than his *person*". "If in this age of societies we should think it wise to recommend another institution for the propagation of Christianity, it would be one the members of which should be pledged to assist and animate one another in living according to the Sermon on the Mount. . . Should it prosper, it would do more for spreading the gospel than all other associations which are now receiving the patronage of the Christian world." Again, "The best and only standard of character is the life." "The honor of religion can never suffer by admitting to Christian fellowship men of irreproachable lives". "No man can be excommunicated from it [the true church] but by himself, by the death of goodness in his own breast." So Dr. Gannett said, "Righteousness is the central principle of Christianity, and the true basis of the Unitarian denomination"; while Dr. Peabody wrote, "Fidelity in duty, not accuracy of belief, is our test of the Christian character."

But who is authorized to define Christianity or tell us what distinguishes it? When, a few years ago, there was a dispute over the pronunciation of the name of a sister state—whether it should be Arkan'sas or Ark'an-saw—the majority of the state decided by their representatives in the legislature. They voted Ark'ansaw, and I do not see that we have any appeal from the decision. Now, if we admit that the majority of any body at any time can define its status and principles, that the majority in Christendom have the right to define Christianity, then the Unitarian definition goes for nothing. The whole aim of and task of orthodoxy, catholic or evangelical, has been to define it by dogmas. *Have faith, believe*, has been the universal appeal. Live as you please, but no purity of life can save

the doubting or disbelieving soul. And from first to last, for all these generations, all orthodox bodies have unanimously and consistently denied to us the Christian name. Till some among us, even if they do not doubt their right to it, are resolved no longer to claim it. They regard it as too largely identified with error and superstition to make it worth contending for. To others, like Messrs. Abbot, Potter and Frothingham, whether defined by the life and teachings of Jesus himself, or by the larger history of the Christian movement, it involves radical error. It means doctrines which they believe are false, and which time and truth will render as obsolete as ancient mythology. In their view there is a kind of dishonesty and misrepresentation connected with our use of phrases thus emptied of the meanings given to them by nearly all Christendom.

Besides, men have a superstition about this name as though there were something talismanic in it, something to conjure with. The sound is more to them than the sense. Why, do not such struggles as we have just had at Cincinnati reveal to us that dulness of comprehension even among ourselves, which makes good people feel safe in a fellowship that declares its interest in "Christianity", but unsafe in one whose object is to promote the cause of "truth, righteousness, and love in the world". Looking at what has been done in the name of Christianity in the course of its history, at the persecutions it has set on foot, at the crimes it has blessed, at what it might do to-day if the opportunity offered, I am free to say that I feel safer in a fellowship that bases itself not on theological doctrines, but on ethical principles; not upon the singular and special, but upon the common and universal. Christianity, as defined in the creeds and by the churches, is visible and transient; religion, as named by truth, righteousness and love, though invisible, is eternal.

When you say Christianity, I do not know what you mean, I must find out what church you belong to, discover what you hold essential to your faith. The Mormon, Catholic, Calvinist, Shaker and Universalist, do not agree. But I have no doubt what you mean when you speak of *truth, righteousness and love*. I cannot tell at first, it may be, how *much* you mean by them; how readily and constantly you will make sacrifices in their behalf. But if there are any words upon which we can agree, they are these; all men feel their significance and the obligatory character of these conceptions. All men have some experience of them. We know that they are expressions for the divinest things in heaven or on earth, in life or death.

It is well understood that we have in all our churches, those who neither call themselves, nor wish to be called Christians. For them, the name means, under any interpretation, too much or too little. They may be of our very best people,—they often are. They have thought much on these problems of religious faith; they are striving with us after the truth; they have cast away many things commonly believed; but, in common with all those whom we love and respect, they are conscientious in conduct, reaching out for the more perfect life. Shall our church keep its portals open to such with a sincere and cordial and equal welcome? Shall we continue to furnish a free and undogmatic communion and shelter for those cast out of other churches by the very phraseology of the rituals and creeds?

Just when Jesus, as under the Unitarian faith, was seen to be less than God, it became a logical necessity that Christianity should be seen as less than all truth, less than the sum of all the virtues. When Jesus is no longer thought of as the Deity himself, the religion of Jesus is no longer thought of as universal, is no longer the whole of religion. The religion of Jesus may be the best historical instance or exemplification of the religious spirit, on the whole, that the world has seen. So I believe. I bow my heart in deepest reverence before his teachings and his life. But there was religion and faith and duty before Jesus lived. It has existed for all centuries as the ame-

liorating power of humanity, and where his name was never heard. It still prompts to kindness and fidelity in other worships upon the earth, and where his name is cast out; so grievously has the thought of him been perverted by the pride and exclusiveness, by the superstitions and insincerities of the church which wears his name.

Do you still ask why we chose to make the basis of our conference, "truth, righteousness and love", rather than "Christianity"? To sum up all, because they are words less liable to be mistaken and because they are larger. Under all definitions thus far Christianity is special. It pertains to a certain time and place—Palestine, 2,000 years ago: to a certain person and institution, about which no agreement is possible. But truth is limitless, righteousness is a sentiment universal, and love is not only coextensive with human experience, it is coeval with God. The adjective always limits the noun. "Pure Christianity," even, is less than Christianity: it is the peculiarity which each sect of Christianity sets up for itself. "Christian truth" is less than all truth; and in the past, and up to this present hour, it has been a perpetual menace to free inquiry. "Christian righteousness" has heaped contempt upon daily duties under the epithet of "mere morality": and "Christian love" has sought to put to death or cover with obloquy the noblest names of history, while it has portrayed a Deity who, for his own glory, foredoomed uncounted and unborn millions of his own children to everlasting torment. It was nothing to be compared with the stupendous horror of this awful decree, that His one favorite and best beloved Son should suffer a few hours or a few years the agonies of a human and earthly persecution ending in death.

So we chose to stand for "truth, righteousness and love", as larger than Christianity,—meaning not merely the truth, justice and love of the Christian, but that of the Jew also, and of the heretic and the alien: truth, right and love, divine or human, in science or revelation, wherever found,

"On Christian or on heathen ground".

Moreover this resolution in using the word Christianity was directed with a personal aim. It was meant to hit any among us who had a scruple about the use of this term. It was meant to point such to the door of our fellowship; to intimate to them that their company was no longer wanted; to say in a word that they were now at liberty to go. No matter what was urged in its defense, in reality it was a decree of excommunication. But an act of excommunication on account of belief is contrary to the declared policy of our denomination. This would have cost us the fellowship of several noble men; it would have cost us the penalty of perpetual shame. We did what we could to avert this blunder, and to protect the exposed minority.

II. The question has been asked, mainly, I think, by those who have not studied our movement very fully, what right have you to use the name Unitarian to cover so divergent beliefs? "Here are men almost orthodox, others rejecting the supernatural, and a few at least, away out on the verge of the ethical societies, or Ingersollism." In this respect, however, we share the conditions which to some extent are found in all denominations. None stand where they did a generation ago. "Certainly, orthodoxy to-day cannot be defined by its historic creeds without misrepresenting a large number of its modern representatives." Yet while orthodoxy continues to offer its obsolete phraseology and its creeds honey-combed with doubt, to be solemnly assented to by all, with mental reservations, in every possible sense, and in no sense whatever, we have no creeds and never had any which any church or association was authorized to impose upon its membership. We have sometimes had statements of principles or belief in our individual independent churches; but they have not generally been made a test even of church membership, far less a condition of the soul's salvation. We have never addressed the church members of the congregations as the saints, the regenerated and the saved, while the rest were saluted as the

sinners, the impenitent and the lost—without God and without hope in this world or in the world to come.

Character with us has always seemed more significant than confession or creed. From the first, Unitarians saw that men's thought of God and of religion must grow with growing truth. They refused to close debate on any theological point by an article. They beheld in the prevailing dogmas of the church, thought in a state of arrested development, the free mind of reason rebuked with a "thus far and no farther, at your peril!" Our first churches, and our Divinity School at Cambridge, were dedicated to freedom of inquiry. "Unitarianism", said Dr. Dewey, "is characterized not so much as being a system of thought as a way of thinking, and that may be called, whether for praise or blame, the rational way." Joseph H. Allen said it is less a sect than "a movement away from all sects".

It is not to be forgotten, however, that the name "Unitarian" was not one of our own choosing. Like the name "Christian", it was unknown to those who originated the movement, and was given invidiously,—given by its enemies, given by those who saw no "Christianity" in it. As early as 1828 Channing, nevertheless, said, "I have no anxiety to wear the livery of any party. I, indeed, take cheerfully the name of a Unitarian, because unwearied efforts are used to raise against it a popular cry; and I have not so learned Christ as to shrink from reproaches cast on what I deem his truth. Were the name more honored, I should be glad to throw it off; for I fear the shackles which a party connection may impose." It was dear to him, as to others, because it was pledged "to progress as its life and end"; because it was the strongest protest in his time "against mental slavery" in religion. And yet all those early Unitarians were not only denied the Christian name by orthodoxy, but they had all the vocabulary of anathema and infidelity hurled at their heads. So must we, if we are worthy, stand the charges of destructionists and atheists. Already one of our own number, exasperated by the action of the Cincinnati Conference, utters in broken accents what we may expect to hear in louder, steadier tones from that part of Christendom which has always tried so hard and with so little result to set us right. Mr. Douthit, of Shelbyville, in his paper, *Our Best Words*, bids us good-bye; for he looks upon the refusal to accept the Christian resolution as an action clearly atheistic. "While Mr. Gannett's amendment (he writes) was not made by atheists, it is nevertheless atheistic."

To what extent this conviction may spread, I do not know. But if any man can make "truth, righteousness and love" atheistic, then there is no God worth honoring in the universe. If truth, righteousness and love are not the life of Christianity or of any other religion, then that religion is doomed to perish. If truth, righteousness and love are not the conceptions which excite in our souls the emotion of reverence and the passion to worship and adore, then are we brutish indeed. If truth, righteousness and love do not suggest the thought of the spirit's deathlessness, and stay the hope of immortality, then I do not know its perennial source. Channing says of the sense of duty alone, "We forget that it is the germ of immortality."

Truth atheistic? The psalmist saw in it the very pathway of God! Jesus loving and bravely walking in that path in the face of death said "I am the truth". The astronomer Kepler felt this when, coming upon the footsteps of a great physical law and nearing his sublime discovery, he declared with sense of awe, "Great God! I think thy thoughts after Thee!" *Righteousness atheistic?* Saith the Scriptures again: "The Lord is our righteousness"; "Whoever is righteous is born of God"; "Righteousness is the habitation of His throne." *And love atheistic?* Can folly and shallowness farther go? Beware of any religion that so much as hints this. If there is any one name that has been hitherto sacred to rational faith; if there has been any one fundamental doctrine in human redemption; any one virtue which has kept even decaying worships alive beyond their time, it has been this of Love!

It is the one name of the Divine Being which has lasted longest and with deepest power; and which men will never give up while they behold benevolence in the universe or receive a blessing into their daily lives. *Love atheistic?* God is love, and love is God. That term alone includes all the divine attributes. When "Love" and "God" cease to be interchangeable, identical, all rational worship will cease.

There are many things in our modern life to frighten us; which make us fear for ourselves and for the young and future generations. But you will never frighten us by telling us that "truth, righteousness and love" are atheistic; or that it is dangerous to have a denomination of religious societies, however large (or small, if it must be that,) which welcomes to its fellowship "all who wish to join it to help establish truth and righteousness and love in the world". And the question was, and is, would you vote for the retention of an ambiguous word or phrase—a theological term like Christianity—which you perhaps accepted without hesitation or difficulty, but which would exclude from full fellowship good men who do not take the name of theist or Christian, yet who rejoice to work with us to help on the cause of "truth, righteousness and love"?

The position was ably argued that our very latitude will draw some away, unless some "banner words" of theology are held aloft over the churches. This was the reiterated and well remembered cry of Mr. Hepworth years ago. But the argument, if it prove anything, proves too much. If it prove anything, it proves that we should have staid pent up in the other churches, or even now ought to return to them. Then we should have "banners" floating over our heads and captains to lead us. This would be very satisfactory to the larger Christendom, for it has always told us that our latitude was alarming, that our liberty of thinking was a form of license; and that our loose methods of organization could gain few followers.

With us, however, the primary question has not been one of more followers or less followers; not one of numbers, but of principles; not one of popularity, but one of fidelity to the highest truth. No reform was ever yet carried on to the satisfaction of its opponents. And what orthodoxy will say after bestowing generations of abuse on our cause, will not greatly disturb us. Even if the latitude alarms some, it at least does not stultify our whole history; it does not exclude; not in that way does it limit fellowship. More might come to us if we remained where we were, or where the fathers were, or went backward; fewer are likely to go with any advancing body. But that was not the point we were trying to settle. "*Because we are so small (says Mr. Gannett), we must stand for the very highest things in religion, for a faith so live and daring that it shall tend to rend all words that try insistingly to vim it—or else there is no service for us in the world.*"

So, this step was not taken lightly, but in full view of the distinguishing principles of our faith. Not to diminish the sphere of religion, but to enlarge now and for the aftertime the sphere of fellowship and duty. We refused to throw out "banners" with certain great and revered watchwords on them, though under them a greater host might be gathered calling itself Unitarian. These banners are delusive. Rushing to the standards and repeating the mottoes is far too easy a way of learning what Unitarianism is. In fact it is a premium upon ignorance. Too many do that now in all faiths and we know with what want of intelligence and conviction. When men now say that they cannot find out what Unitarianism is, with all our rich and varied literature in reach, then we know that they are not willing to give it the study that is necessary to comprehend this or any other faith. Condense Unitarianism into some series of short propositions, or assert that Unitarians believe in God, in worship, in immortality, in Christianity, which is mainly true; you still have not told them what distinguishes us from the churches about us. You have deceived them, if for a moment they or

you suppose that with this handy statement they can dispense with the reading of such men as Channing, as Dewey, as Emerson, as Parker, as Hedge, Potter and Savage. "The utterance of Unitarianism is not a statement made by any conference, it is a literature." Let it be judged by that. If you want to know what "Darwinism" is, there is no substitute for the "Origin of Species" and the "Descent of Man". To know what Calvinism is you read the "Institutes". To know what Christianity is you cannot leave out the Gospels. And to know what a movement like Unitarianism is, which runs through several generations with many representative men, requires something besides doffing the hat at some banner or device, no matter what motto it bears, or what great words are blazoned thereon.

Scarcely had I returned from Cincinnati when I received a letter from Boston saying that a proposition had already been made in the Council of the National Conference that a committee prepare and present a non-theological constitution for the consideration of that body at its next meeting in Saratoga. Whether the time is ripe for the adoption of so desirable a measure, and for the repeal of an act, sincere and honest in itself, but whose fruit has been division and injustice, I do not know. That phraseology of the present constitution—preamble, implying the Lordship and infallible authority of Jesus Christ, alienated from our fellowship some of our bravest, truest and most religious men. It needs no prophet to say that some day it will be changed. And yet if the National Conference should do as the Western Conference did at Cleveland four years ago, namely, give us simply a business constitution instead of a theological one, we should doubtless hear again of the atheism of the Unitarian churches. Yes, we reply: atheistic in the sense in which the Constitution of the United States is atheistic; atheistic in the sense in which the public schools are atheistic; atheistic in the sense in which most scientific and benevolent organizations are atheistic; atheistic in the sense in which nature is atheistic; atheistic in the sense in which "truth, righteousness and love", and all the virtues, are atheistic!

There would be abundant cause for fear and reproach if God be taken out of all these things; if he could be successfully denied in all these things,—the real God displaced by a paper God,—and then shut up in some babel of letters, or in a few shibboleths of theology!

"As we broke up that old faith of the world,
Have we, next age, to break up this the new—
Faith, in the thing, grown faith in the report—
Whence need to bravely disbelieve report
Though increased faith in thing reports belie?
Must we deny * * *
Recognized truths, obedient to some truth
Unrecognized yet, but perceptible?—
Correct the portrait by the living face,
Man's God, by God's God in the mind of man?
Then, for the few that rise to the new height,
The many that must sink to the old depth,
The multitude found fall away!"

—Browning.

A FRIEND writes: "I have been reading the life of Agassiz. No book has so taken hold of me for a long time. Let every young man read it and see what life is good for if he has a mind to make himself good for something."

"THE tolerance of the tobacco habit by the community is even more surprising than the tolerance of tobacco itself by the human system."—*Andover Review*.

ROBERTS BROTHERS, of Boston, have reprinted Mrs. C. H. Dall's "Study of Sordello", which can be obtained by sending thirty cents. Only a limited number is issued.